

EXHIBITION OF WORKS PURCHASED BY
THE ART-UNION OF LONDON.

THE number of works of art gathered together in the Suffolk-street Gallery on the present occasion is 264, and includes the selected model for the 500*l.* premium ("The Dancing Girl reclining," by Marshall, A.R.A.), and "The First Whisper of Love," executed in marble by the same artist, for Sir Erskine Perry, a prize-holder of last year—both charming works. David Roberts, R.A., Danby, A.R.A., Witherington, R.A., A. Cooper, R.A., Lee, B.A., Ward, R.A., Hurlstone, Severn, F. Stone, Pyne, J. Allen, Bright, Bentley, Mrs. Melan, Woolmer, Tennant, Goodall, T. F. Marshall, Herring, Anthony, Topham, Lauder, Elmore, Clint, F. R. Pickersgill, Wingfield, Wilson, Clater, Linnell, Fraser, and in the water-colour room, H. Warren, Gastineau, Copley Fielding, Edward Corbould, Prout, Oakley, Callow, De Wint, Robins, Stephenson, Jenkins, Absolon, and many others equally well known, have pictures in the collection. It is an exceedingly interesting exhibition; and, when it is considered how limited after all the range for selection is, through the prior arrangements of the now greatly increased number of private purchasers,—speaks very satisfactorily for the intelligence of the prizeholders. Many of the pictures are now seen for the first time, although previously exhibited elsewhere, and give striking evidence of the importance to an artist, of proper hanging.

Of the pictures here exhibited, it is not too much to say, three-fourths would have remained unsold but for the Art-Union of London, a fact more important still to artists, although not all-important in the eyes of those who view the important operations of the society rightly, and see that its great purpose is to lead the public to love art and study it, a truth, which some members of Parliament who spoke against the bill (now we are happy to say, the Act) for legalizing Art-Unions, seemed strangely ignorant of. Increase the capacity of the judges, elevate the standard of judgment, make the artists' public larger, and his profession more stable and honourable, and art can scarcely fail to be advanced.

We look on the free exhibition provided annually for the public by the Art-Unions, as a most important feature in the scheme, calculated to produce great results. For the next fortnight, persons will be admitted by tickets, easily obtainable from any member (more than a hundred thousand have been issued), and between the 6th and 12th of September all who apply will be admitted without restriction.

The Duke of Cambridge was present at the private view on Saturday, and was attended round the rooms by Mr. Lewis Pocock. His Royal Highness continues to manifest the warmest interest in the progress of the society.

We may take this opportunity to mention, that the committee, with the view of expressing the good opinion they entertain of a model exhibited in their late sculpture competition under the title of "Innocence," and found in be the production of Mr. Foley, have awarded to that gentleman the sum of 100*l.*, on condition of receiving from him a reduced copy, to be executed in porcelain for distribution.

Another of the models, "Iris Ascending," by Mr. Kirk, is to be reduced for the purpose of casting in bronze.

CONSTRUCTION OF RAILWAYS.

THE PERMANENT WAY.

SIR,—It appears now to be the general opinion, that one of the greatest obstacles to the safe increase of speed on railways does not arise from the construction, power, or capability of speed of the locomotive engine, but from the manifest imperfection of the permanent way: the resistance of the atmosphere limits the aspiring genius of the engineer.

The numerous accidents that have occurred on railways, which have proved so fatal in their nature, have been too often attributed to some defect in the engine or the carriages, whereas in all probability the cause has arisen from a badly constructed road.

Many of the accidents might doubtless have been avoided if a better system of supervision had been adopted, and inspectors appointed at frequent intervals, (not by the contractors for the permanent way, whose object is to get work

done at as cheap a rate as possible,) but by some more responsible party, whose sole duty should be to examine every part of the line of railway daily, and cause to be remedied immediately any casualty as soon as possible after it appears.

Engineers are at great pains in setting out railway curves with mathematical accuracy, (and even learned and able works have been published on the subject,) and when those curves are so set out, the roadways are composed of a series of straight bars or rails forming a series of tangents to those curves, thereby creating numerous rigid points that must add considerably to the friction, and consequently the wear and tear of the engine, carriages, and permanent way. On curves of small radius this is an evil of considerable magnitude, and should be remedied by having the railway bars formed or set accurately to the curve, as laid down for the line of railway.

It is evident the more perfect the road is laid in all its parts, the less will be the liability to accident; and no expense or trouble ought to be spared in rendering the permanent way of a railway the most perfect possible.

Accidents sometimes occur from bad joints, or in consequence of one rail projecting slightly before the other at the joint; rails should be truly fitted where they butt together, and made perfectly flush with each other; and to preserve them in that position, I would recommend them to be dovetailed into each other, at the same time making a small allowance for the expansion and contraction of the metal longitudinally.

It has been stated, that accidents have occurred in consequence of the ends of rails working out of the joint chairs; but as this could not occur where the system of continuous bearing is adopted, I presume it has been where transverse sleepers or blocks are used; and the simple remedy I would recommend of driving short piles on each side of the joint sleeper or block would, I think, prove effectual in such cases; or the end of each rail might be keyed to the joint chair, and the hole in the rail slotted (made oblong) slightly, so as to allow it to expand or contract with the changes of the atmosphere, and without disturbing the roadway, which would answer a similar purpose.

I am, Sir, &c.,

B. BAYLIS.

Merthyr Tydfil, Aug. 10, 1846.

FOREIGN ARCHITECTURAL AND COL-
LATERAL INTELLIGENCE.

Origin of Architecture.—The celebrated German architectural writer, J. Andrew Romberg, in a very interesting work commenced some time ago,* makes the following remarks on the above subject:—"The question whether stone or wood structures be more ancient, and whether the building endeavours of man originated in caverns—is, after all, an idle one, as it was the locality and nature of the country which, in all cases, determined its architecture. When only wood was at hand, it certainly served as the primal material of construction. When stone was to be met with, it was combined into walls, first for mere protection from weather, &c. Where, like in the steppes and sahara of Asia and Africa, neither wood nor stone was to be found, tents of beasts' skins served for the dwellings and temples of man, or they dug out holes in the soil to live in. It is certain, moreover, that the most simple and easiest construction is always the oldest, as the more complicated pre-supposes great practice and many helps of mechanics and art. Mr. Romberg, therefore, contends throughout his work for the opinion, that the huge Indian cave-temples are not the oldest, but of a later date than the pagodas built in the open country. For excavating caves and caverns into such huge spaces, great mechanical power, many complicated calculations and computations, and much refinement of art were required; far more, indeed, than for the piling up those pyramid-shaped structures of the plains. The latter, therefore, were the first constructed, which Mr. R. also finds confirmed by other collateral testimony. Mr. Romberg's work treats first of the pagoda-temples, and describes every one of any consequence. Then follow the cavern-temples. The chapter on Indian cities and fortresses is very interesting, shewing that that

* Romberg und Steger: Geschichte der Baukunst—History of Architecture from the earliest period up to the present time. Vol. I. Introduction and History of Indian Architecture. Leipzig. 1844. fol.

country possessed larger and finer cities before our era, destroyed by the Mahomedan invaders. This part of the work concludes with a theoretical disquisition on Indian styles of architecture, in which its many orders are detailed, partly after original Indian sources, which have not yet been generally resorted to by architectural authors.

The Royal China and Painted Glass Manufactories of Munich.—Those two important State establishments of art which had been hitherto combined in one building—probably for no other reason than that of both requiring the same element, have now been divided; and that for glass painting has been removed to an especial building in Louisa-street, behind the Hypothek, which has been executed by Architect Professor Voit, advised by the director of the establishment, Mr. de Heas, and Inspector Aismüller. Of the forty-two larger and smaller spaces, the greater portion is appropriated to the execution of the glass paintings, the dwelling of the director, &c. There is a chemical laboratory for the preparing of the colours, a great furnace-hall, with a number of stoves, in which the paintings are fired, and many rooms for their successive preparation. The chief space, however, is the large exhibition, or rather viewing-hall, in which, at a window, forty-two feet high and twenty feet broad, the largest glass paintings are placed in their single parts, and then, as a whole. For judging and arranging their final grand effect, three galleries, placed around at different heights, afford a view of these huge pieces from different angles of vision; and there is a machine in the room, by which a scaffolding is moved in every direction, so that the artists and workmen can approach any portion of the huge glass paintings with perfect ease. Great progress has been made in this establishment even since the first astonishingly successful trials for Regensburg, and that so much admired cycle of pictures executed for the church of St. Mary in the Au; and the adhering to a perfectly stern style, as well as the choice variety and solidity of the colours, have raised this establishment above all others of a similar kind. Besides the huge windows ordered by the King of Bavaria for the Dome of Cologne, there are now making five large ones for the cathedral of Agram, besides others for St. Petersburg, England, &c.; all which give honourable employment to a number of artists and workmen, and trumpet forth the fame of the art-school of the Bavarian capital.

Restoration of the Old City Hall of Aix-la-Chapelle.—This hall, of great antiquity, possesses at its west end two recesses, which, separated by lattice work, served for the reception of the orchestra, servants, &c. These spaces will now be united to the whole, and, adorned by frescoes, will form a most striking and beautiful town-hall. The statues of German emperors, which encumbered once this place, will not be again replaced by the Prussian Commission of Arts.

Architect Osten, from Hanover—who had sojourned for a considerable time at Rome, has returned home to execute several important structures, and to publish a work on Longabardic architecture in North Italy.

Monument to the ancient Architect, John Hülz.—The sculptor, Andrew Friedrich, at Strasburg, who had previously executed at his own expense a monument to Erwin, the builder of the Strasburg minster, at the native place of the latter, Steinbach, near Baden, has made to the corporation of Cologne the offer to execute a statue of John Hülz, a native of that city, who had completed the top of the Strasburg Cathedral. It is to be made of Kronthal sandstone, and placed in St. Andrew's Church, near the dome.

The Mineral riches of the Isthmus of Panama.—At the present moment, when either the cutting of a canal through the American Isthmus, or the making of a railway, or both, are nigh to be accomplished, a report on the mineral riches of that locality has been widely circulated in the French periodicals, which, as the name of Baron Thénard has been introduced therein, deserves some attention. It is said that a distinguished French engineer, on surveying the Isthmus for professional purposes, has discovered gold in the sand of the seashore, the amount of which he calculates at five milliards of francs. The construction of a canal or railway would be paid a hundredfold by the gaining of this precious metal, &c.